

# Prime Mauritian luxury

**LE TOUESSROK:** Everything one can hope for and more, writes KAVITH HARRILALL.

ALTHOUGH I was prepared for a luxurious three days at the five star Le Touessrok Resort in Mauritius, the comprehensive array of top-notch amenities, staff members' attention to detail, and my own personal butler were pleasant surprises that left me speechless upon my arrival.

The extraordinary levels of friendliness and competence of staff at Le Touessrok are perhaps the most outstanding features of this visit to the Island paradise of Mauritius.

And Le Touessrok is truly a utopia, a slice of paradise located on the east coast at Trou d'Eau Douce Bay.

Le Touessrok boasts a host of impressive selling points — from luxury, romance and cuisine to a Givenchy Spa and a Bernard Langer-designed championship golf course.

It is truly everything that one could hope for in a resort that has won a host of awards over the years.

A spectacular entrance greeted me upon arrival, with stunning lanterns nestled within a giant fig tree in the courtyard.

The journey actually began with an early drive from Pietermaritzburg to Durban International Airport for the connecting flight to Johannesburg, with World Leisure Holidays and its holding company, Sun Resorts, taking care of the local and international arrangements.

I was driven to Durban by a chauffeur in a luxury Mercedes Benz sedan, courtesy of Avis.

Air Mauritius then ensured that I relaxed in style at their Business Class lounge at O.R. Tambo International Airport.

After the four-hour flight aboard Air Mauritius's A 340 Airbus and the 50-minute drive to the resort from the airport, our group arrived at Le Touessrok at around 8 pm. I was immediately struck by the warmth of the staff.

Karen Joorun, the resort's public relations manager, was a perfect hostess and she ensured that we were treated to lemon grass tea and more drinks within the first half-hour of our arrival.

I was then introduced to my personal butler, the impeccably dressed Vinessan Soobrayen, who took care of my every need during my stay.

A tour of my "junior suite" left me utterly astounded.

Impressive trimmings, such as a safe de-

posit box, chic decor, a large LCD-screen television and a glorious sea view were some of the perks I encountered.

The suite also housed an espresso coffee and tea machine.

However, I was completely entranced by the fact that the warm and gentle Indian Ocean waters were literally beneath the balcony of my "junior suite".

The evening was spent in the company of award-winning chef Barnaby Jones, who treated us to an array of dishes at a top restaurant at Le Touessrok, known as Barlen's.

A total of 32 sumptuous dishes were on the menu and I was highly impressed by the beef "shishami", lamb medallions, lasagna and rich vanilla-flavoured cheese.

The wide variety of cuisine on offer is of the highest quality. There are six restaurants in the resort.

I had a scrumptious breakfast the next morning at the Three-Nine-Eight restaurant, which offered a comprehensive breakfast buffet.

Seemingly minor yet useful services, such as scented refresher towels, were always on hand throughout the stay.

Breakfast was followed by a one-hour drive to the town of Ebene, where I met with Tommy Wong, chief financial officer of Sun Resorts Ltd and Clyde Vacher, communication and public affairs manager of Sun Resorts Ltd.

Wong, who is also the president of the Association des Hôtelières et Restaurateurs de l'île Maurice (AHRIM — an industry association), stressed that although overall tourist arrivals to Mauritius for the year to date declined somewhat, the island has held its own as a luxury travel destination during the global recession.

Indeed, Mauritius, and Le Touessrok in particular, are still favourite destinations for British, French, German, Italian and South African high-end clientele.

A relaxing bath awaited me upon my return to Le Touessrok.

I enjoyed the enchanting view as I gazed

out at the Indian Ocean in the distance, courtesy of the sea-view from the funky "egg-shaped" bath tub in my suite.

A masseuse at the Givenchy Spa then treated me to a relaxing 50-minute full-body massage.

Apart from the French and British historic influences, the island is well known for its

welcoming and culturally active Indian population.

Safran, described as the top Indian restaurant in Mauritius, was the venue for dinner that evening.

The menu consisted of — among other dishes — a prawn, fish and calamari starter, followed by prawn curry and strawberry sorbet and yoghurt flambé decorated with rhubarb and strawberry.

One of the (many) highlights of the experience at Le Touessrok was the breakfast on the beach, laid out especially for our tour group the next morning.

This was followed by a relaxing drive to Grand Baie — a well-known tourist village and shopping destination, which also boasts a host of charming coffee shops and restaurants — as well as other nearby towns such as Belle Mare.

The rest of the day was spent on the beach and in the suite, taking in the breath-taking views on offer.

My butler was on hand at all times, ensuring that I was always comfortable and pampered.

Le Touessrok has 200 rooms, suites and villas.

The villas are surely the flagships within Sun Resorts' property, Le Touessrok.

According to Joorun, a junior suite (double room) could cost an average of about 700 euros (about R7 600) per day (half-board, breakfast and dinner).

In contrast, a stay at the exclusive villa could cost the discerning traveller about 12 000 Euro or about R130 000 (high season) per day (low season about 5 000 euro or about R55 000).

The ultra luxurious villa residences boast swimming pools, gardens, private beach and individual access — among other trappings.

And it was at the villa that I spent most of the final evening at Le Touessrok.

I indulged in a smoked salmon starter, barbecued fillet steak, prawns and lamb chops, before finishing off the dinner with a dessert, featuring banana flavoured with vanilla and a rich coconut ice-cream.

The departure the next morning was, as you can imagine, all the more difficult.

Le Touessrok raised the bar when it comes to service levels, facilities and every other aspect of the travel and leisure experience.

Holidaying in South Africa or abroad will simply never be the same.





**PHOTO: KAVITH HARRILALL**  
Charming wooden walk-ways connect the different nodes of Le Touessrok.

**PHOTO: SUPPLIED**  
Le Touessrok has been described as 'a slice of palm-fringed paradise'.



**PHOTO: KAVITH HARRILALL**

The intoxicating environment, featuring the warm and gentle Indian Ocean waters and sunny skies, will leave South African guests at Le Touessrok completely relaxed.





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LOCATED ON THE EAST COAST AT TROU D'EAU DOUCE BAY.

#### **HOTEL: ALL ABOUT SUN HOTELS**

Sun Resorts Hotel Group is a Mauritian hospitality company that owns, operates, and redevelops five high-end resorts. The company's flagship property is Le Touessrok, a member of the Leading Hotels of the World and the first in Mauritius to receive ISO 9001:2008 certification in 2009. Sun Resorts is the holding company of World Leisure Holidays.

